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and
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THE SOVIET SPIRIT AND CORPORATE GREED

By Kenneth Leslie

The Soviet Union is more important to religion than to economics or politics.

It is more than possible that the people of the Soviet Union are too busy creating a new life to make *any* interpretation of it, too deeply immersed in the life itself. We can see the analogy among people in this country who, having awakened from the long sleep of their dichotomous life, are engrossed in its re-integration and, in turning against the false religion which divided their life, have turned against all religion and all symbols of religion, even the very conception of religion itself.

Atheist Purgative:

There has been a profound emptying out, disgorging, of the words which at one time signified the deepest meaning of life but which have for a long time constituted a means of escape from these meanings, indeed have been used to transvalue these meanings into their opposites. Many of those in our society who are striving to maintain what individuality they have and to build it stronger by referring theory to action in ever greater areas of their contact with their world,, indeed most such individuals are compelled to keep away from the ecclesiastical atmosphere as from the plague, for the reason that it is suffused with a falseness which hollows or half strangles the very tone of the big-pulpit preacher as he addresses the Almighty in public prayer.

Our Culture's Religious Illiteracy:

The invincible ignorance as to what religion means was shown in connection with the English film "Black Narcissus" which is an eloquent and beautiful attempt to convey certain religious lessons, one of which is that religion is not pietism. The pietistic nuns were taught a series of lessons as to the true nature of religion by the people of India to whom they thought they were bringing the light. Yet a Protestant guide to motion pictures misunderstands the whole thing and condemns the picture because it does not give a true picture of missions.

The church is false to its mission because the church has ceased seriously to criticize. The church poses anti-church secularism as its enemy. But its true enemy is the secularism inside the church rather than that outside. In much of what passes for secularism outside the church is to be found the seed at least of true religion.

The church *has accepted the world-as-it-is,* the status quo, but the words of hymn, prayer, scripture are words which *do not accept* the world; therefore they must be uttered either in the fulsome voice of hypocrisy or in the strained utterance of one side of a *divided* personality.

A ghost writer for a national body of businessmen in the US who carry on propaganda throughout the country in favor of

what they call the system of free enterprise wrote a speech for a business executive and was called on the carpet by the chief of the organization because he had in his speech mentioned with approval "the abundant life." He pointed out that the phrase was taken from the New Testament but his chief said the hell with that, it was a Roosevelt phrase and it had to come out. Actually he need not have worried about it because not only church people but all our people now are thoroughly accustomed to the use of phrases which are to be taken either not seriously or in their opposite sense.

Free enterprise, for instance, means freedom to see to it that nobody competes, which means monopoly. The church is no longer the only agency dividing the mind. The technique has spread to press, radio, films. Yet it is from "religion" as the self-contradictive divider that those individuals who are striving to bind up the division within their lives, to pull themselves together, to get their feet down on the ground of this planet, have felt compelled to retreat.

The task which must be attempted is the difficult one of reclaiming for these individuals, not at all necessarily their cast-off "religion", but at least *a firm conviction of the validity of their own insight.*

It has been a mistake, when liquidating a false conception of reality and of human development, to throw out the general conception of God (reality) altogether. This leads to a religious exacerbation of the economic struggle which could have been avoided. We can understand how naturally, almost inevitably, this mistake came to be made. It can easily be rectified.

The English group known as the Council of Clergy and Ministers for Common Ownership is an attempt along these lines. It wars openly against "the owners and controllers of the means of life and knowledge" who "conscript for purposes of total war the masses whom they had hitherto conscripted to produce profit for the few." Our present economic system they castigate in true prophetic style in that it "promotes mass selfishness, class-division, and international war. It is a worship of Mammon, and, as such, is a moral outrage."

It is unlikely for some time to come that the new liturgies of world communal living will be expressed in one over-all language. Meanwhile the separate liturgies will be drawn together in their expressions by their common intent and purpose. In the sense that religion has to do with the development of the life of man and of his joy in living, the enrichment of his contacts with his natural environment and with other men, above all with the integrity of man, the honesty and wholeness of man's approach to nature and to himself, and as a consequence of his honesty and wholeness, his growing freedom, the Soviet way of life, far from perfected yet constantly being improved, has the biggest thing to say since Jesus brought the Sadducees

face to face with *their* divided lives.

In the Soviet Union there is a sincere effort for the first time in history to give all the people an opportunity to be persons. In Christian phrase we would call this saving souls.

Our Death-in-Life Culture:

It is the devil's purpose, if you believe in the enemy of life (and you must if you have your eyes open, because he is everywhere) to lure men into circles of prison-habits and keep them there chasing, driving, so they think, but really *chased, driven.* This is the death-in-life of our commercial culture.

The greatest assistant the devil ever had in his work is commercialism, that way of life which looks upon things as objects of exchange, ignoring their intrinsic value, thinking of them only in terms of the money they are "worth" and in what manner they may be made to "pay." A picture of the debasement of man by commercialism may be seen in the newsreel of the purse-like face of Schacht, the string drawn tight at his mouth. He is shown looking at the Nuremberg trial film exhibiting bins of gold dentures torn from murdered human beings and switching suddenly to show tubs full of severed heads, warehouses full of human hair for mattress manufacturers, flesh for soap manufacturers. The eyes of Schacht did not blink. The habits of calculation and of Commerce seemed to hold him in their talons.

To repeat, the theory of Christianity and Judaism of the infinite value of each human being is denied in our commercial society. As an ideal it may be "striven for," never by means less perfect than the ideal. This of course prevents all striving, for the premise of striving is the use of less than perfect means; this for the simple reason that the means must be taken by less than perfect people in a world less than perfect.

Thus our pulpit-striving takes for granted that the end to be reached can never be reached, and so the pulpits of our commercial culture are cut off entirely from those people who want to join theory and practice in one integral life, that is, from truly religious people.

It is our opinion that the Soviet Union which has no use for theory apart from practice is bringing man's divided soul together again, binding up the terrible wound with which our commercial society has divided the soul of Western man.

Critics of the Soviet Union frequently say that Soviet individuals are lost in the existence of the state. But what is an individual? Is he not an undivided person? And is it not here in Western capitalistic society that man has been divided not only from himself but from his world? And is it not the Soviet government that is trying to give man the opportunity to find himself once more and to find his world?

The schizophrenia, or the divided soul, or the lost soul,

as we Christians put it, of our commercial society, is sometimes regularized and made acceptable by heavy thinkers who clothe it in a tragic cloak and bear it as a cross. They make of society a fixed evil thing which cannot be changed and of man an impotent victim of this society. Since he is not responsible for it he cannot be expected to remedy it and so in one way or another, whether by deep thinkers or shallow thinkers, the general climate of hypocrisy makes our diplomatic and political hypocrisy all the more acceptable to people generally.

But fascism is not of itself by nature pietistic and as it develops power it becomes independent of the church and gradually drops its earlier pretence to piety. Then we get the much-touted "quarrels" between the church and the fascist state with the double hypocrisy in the complaints of the church against state interference with church concessions. This happened in Europe in the days of Hitler and it is being repeated now.

The Illusion of Democracy:

Even during the development today in Western Germany of the new America-sponsored fascism we can hear the complaints of Pastor Niemoller who says German "people are being convinced now that the whole propaganda for democracy has been an illusion, worse even than Hitler's propaganda. For everybody knew or soon came to know, that Hitler personally did not admit any authority superior to himself; but the Western powers propagated humane and Christian principles and asserted that they were fighting for the validity of these principles. This faith has been utterly shattered, and what is even worse, with this faith the trust in any truth and humanity has been destroyed."

Of course the propaganda for democracy was an illusion! If Pastor Niemoller had learned anything since he was a U-Boat Commander he would know *why* it was an illusion.. *All* talk of democracy becomes illusory in a commercial society where corporate greed calls every tune. Corporate greed (it happens to be American this time) is calling the tune in Germany. Corporate greed is not human. It has no face. But the Germans would reproach corporate greed for betraying their trust in it. They prefer to curse God and die than to curse greed and live. To such depths the church is led in a commercial society.

Niemoller fails to measure the struggles of *some of the people of Europe against corporate greed.* And in so failing he declares once more the bankruptcy of that institutional religion which has been conditioned in a commercial society.

We believe that Soviet Russia has opened a new era in the religious life of mankind.

Its philosophers may emphasize alternately their one-ness with and their other-ness from past philosophies. They may, as philosophers have always done, stress alternately determinism and

freedom in man. Philosophers, important as they are, always move behind life, steadying it on its way perhaps but never wholly anticipating it and frequently out of step with it entirely.

From scientific research, from applied science, from agriculture, from mining, from fishing, from industry, the Soviet Union has taken the cold technicality and into each has breathed the warmth of vital relationships, so that a man enters a laboratory, or a fishing boat, or a mine, or a factory, with an absolutely new conception of his role. He and his fellows are parts of a great throbbing life. Their little selves are gone. Surely we can recognize in this life analogies with what we have dreamed of as true religion. Granted that our picture is not exact, that there are malcontents. Granted that there are areas of human instinct apart from the commercial instinct which are liable to be led into temptation. Such things should not be ignored, but the present is a time for rejoicing. The human spirit has, in the Soviet Marxist experiment, heroically shaken itself free from mankind's greatest chain.

Russia Practices the "Good News":

Some will say we shouldn't call this religion because it was achieved by people who hate the forms of religion and who did what they did in the name of humanism. Such an objection will naturally come from those who are dominated by formalistic religion and by those who believe that religious insights are revealed *to* man from the *outside.* But wherever truly human hearts beat they will rejoice in the fulfillment of the promise of the good news about man.

Man climbed laboriously from the days of the tribe through the feudal and capitalistic eras, up the steep inclines from his ignorance, up through the narrow defiles of his greed. At last he has come through the high pass of the mountains of his sojourning. He has not come to the end, no, but, standing where he does stand, he has the right, nay the duty, to rejoice and to give thanks and to sing great hymns to the Spirit of His Ongoing.

EISENHOWER IN SPAIN

By Louise Harding

On the recent come-together of the American president and the Spanish butcher and dictator, Eisenhower said to Franco, "I lift my glass to you," and to friendship between USA and (clerico-fascist) Spain. And he had the audacity to claim that his aim in Spain is "Peace and friendship in freedom"—when it is well known that only massive contributions from the United States keep Franco's heel on the necks of the starving masses of Spain.

All Franco's measures of repression cannot suppress demonstrations of discontent. In April, 1956, industrial workers in the northern part of the country—the Basque country, and also in Catalonia, started a strike. A report from Paris at that time said that while the strike was for higher wages, it was "also connected with the rising general unrest and hatred of Franco's government", as well as with a rising movement of protest among students and intellectuals. "Behind the protest is deep resentment against restriction of free expression by the fascists . . . Last week three young men of well-known families were arrested for distributing *illegal leaflets . . .*"

An item in "Freedom" (London", Oct. 24 of this year, tells how Franco had a Spanish political fugitive, Juan Garcia Suarez, *executed by garotte* at Las Palmas, Canary Islands a few days before. "Suarez, who remained in hiding in the hills of the Canary Islands for nineteen years since the Spanish Civil War, was convicted of murdering a butcher who tried to find his hiding place on a night in 1947 by beating Suarez's mother. The execution raised so much opposition from church and civil leaders, that the authorities moved the execution forward one day. A plea for Suarez's life was sent to General Franco. But to no avail."

Robert Edwards, according to a Reuters report from London, Dec. 24, went to Spain as a representative of the British Labor party to observe the trial of 17 Spaniards accused of "military rebellion" for a strike call last June. Said Edwards ,"This trial was planned after Ike's visit so that the publicity of the visit of the American President would overshadow what was going to happen to these young people. It was a deliberate piece of strategy, in my opinion."

Salvador de Madariaga (at present a professor at Oxford) told a news conference (London, Dec. 15, AP) that 21 Spanish Socialists have been arrested in the Basque region since Nov. 28. "He estimated that at least 1500 political prisoners are in Spanish jails."

De Madariaga gave newsmen the text of a letter to Mr. Eisenhower which he said the Junta Democratica handed the U.S. Embassy in Madrid the week before, saying,

> "We shall despair if you limit yourself to proclaiming friendship between your Government and the present dictatorship."

That is preciasly what Eisenhower did.

S.F. Chronicle published a press report of how, at a State dinner tendered by Franco,

> "Mr. Eisenhower said *Spain and the United States "want freedom for themselves and all nations."*

"Liberty", and the Garotte:

In Toasting Eisenhower, Franco responded that Spaniards are well aware that

"we enjoy the preservation of liberty in western Europe, without falling under the Communist yoke, to your energy and generosity and those of your country."

The whole thing reminds one of Nevile Henderson's remarks being received as Ambassador to Germany. (See Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945. Papen reported (June 1, 1937):—

"Sir Nevile first of all stressed the fact that he was very grateful for the friendly reception that he had received here from all quarters, especially from the Fuehrer. He entirely agreed with the Fuehrer that the first and greatest danger to the existence of Europe was Bolshevism, and all other viewpoints had to be subordinated to this view. In England, too, people were beginning to perceive this more clearly, and the desire to understand the New Germany as well as to reach an agreement with her has gained ground, particularly in the past few weeks."

This and other like pandering to Nazism greatly encouraged Hitler to start WW II. But it is precisely what Eisenhower meant when he said (press report when he was en route to visit Franco) that it is

"impossible to have real peace until the whole world is free."

—By "freedom," the cartels, and their agents, m e a n the triumph of counter-revolution in the world.

Eisenhower's pilgrimage was NOT in the interest of Peace. The western-European alliance against Communism is breaking down, on account of de Gaulle's attitude, and "Ike" is out to mend fences by making promises to the nations of Asia and the middle east. How far the Congress will support him, with finances as they are in the United States, remains to be seen.

However, this reporter maintains that any official who would shake hands with Franco, would do the same with Hitler (if he were in power: Adolf, if still alive—and he could be, in Spain—has now, however, nothing in the way of bases or other aid to give away. So — !)

Returning to Washington, Eisenhower told "the armed services" in a Christmas message coming from the cruiser Des Moines in the Mediterranean:

"I believe we can continue our work throughout the coming year strong in the knowledge that the future can be successfully employed by brave and generous men united in the building of peace on earth."

—If someone will kindly call to the attention of your reporter one *kind and generous action* known to have been performed by Eisenhower, she will refrain from interjecting at this point—a sarcastic "Sez who?"

MY MANIFESTO

By Lock Ding

I will strive to find in all religions the radiant gem of Truth which is their soul.

I will search for spiritual facts cleansed of their confusing encrustations of misunderstanding and possibly deliberate distortion, and get the exact teaching and disciplines in the pure unadulterated form.

I shall honor and venerate the Saints, Seers and Sages of All religions, and seek to understand the esoteric teachings of them all.

I shall cling to the good that is in my religion and sect, and personal philosophy of life and seek constantly to expand my consciousness and spiritual understanding; and refuse to be bound by the narrow dogmas made by men which can bind my Soul to ignorance and spiritual stagnation.

I shall be a free soul as God wants me to be and seek God in the way I know, and recognize authority not so much in the man or leader, but in the Truth. Hence I am really of all sects, all denominations and never one alone.

I shall recognize that science and religion are not actually at variance, but basically and fundamentally united as ONE true path to God .

I shall retain all the good out of the ancient past, cherish the good in all religions, seek an ever expanding state of consciousness that will carry me into a vision of a glorious future.

I shall exercise the free will that is given to me and to every human being by God, and be free in my use of "selective learning," choosing to accept and believe only that which appeals to my conscience as Truth and reject others.

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